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PROGRAMME PLANNING: COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR MALI

Note by the Administrator

I. THE PROGRAMMING PROCESS

1. The joint United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/government evaluation and consultation process was initiated with the mid-term review of the fourth country programme in May 1990, which concluded notably on the need to adopt a more programmatic approach and enhance integrated direct support to rural populations. This process was continued in early 1991 by the organization of sectoral and intersectoral missions to assess past and ongoing programmes and to project future technical cooperation needs, in collaboration with relevant United Nations system agencies, to prepare the fifth country programme. Fields covered included the human development index (Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)), economic planning and water management (Department of Technical Cooperation for Development (DTCD)), grass-roots development (International Labour Organisation (ILO)), rural development and agricultural production (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), literacy and biodiversity (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)), private sector development (UNDP/ILO/United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)), telecommunications (International Telecommunication Union (ITU)), agro-meteorology (World Meteorological Organization (WMO)), civil aviation (International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)), tourism (World Tourism Organization (WTO)) and trade (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)). A global technical needs assessment was also undertaken.

2. Preparation, and then discussion, of the UNDP advisory note was the occasion of substantive consultations within the Government and with the United Nations and donor community in respect to the assessment of the fourth country programme and perceived present technical cooperation needs and proposed areas of concentration. The same process was thereafter applied by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation to the draft country programme document. The document, which relies to a great extent on the substance of the advisory note, included the various comments made during the process.

3. Both the advisory note and the country programme document were completed incorporating the findings of a national conference (July 1991) and national workshops on: education for all (September 1991); women and children (also September 1991); trade, industry and cottage industry (October 1991) and rural development (December 1991); and the preparatory sessions of the Conference on the north (November and December 1991).

II. ANALYTICAL COMMENTARY ON THE FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME

4. The fifth country programme aims to help Mali achieve two interlinked long-term development objectives: the satisfaction of basic needs and the improved management of the development process. The satisfaction of basic needs will be pursued through grass-roots development, environmental sustainability and primary health and education programmes. Improved management of development will be sought through better programming of national resource allocation and facilitation of private initiative programmes. Empowerment of the people provides thematic direction to the first objective and improved organization to the second. Both are geared towards sustained human development.

5. Grass-roots development will be achieved by combining three complementary strategies. First, the decentralization process will be enhanced by a programme designed to strengthen community participation, involving functional literacy, structuring of the decision-making process and selective construction of social and productive infrastructures. Second, the role of women in development will be enhanced by expanding their involvement in the decision-making process and assigning greater value to their contribution to the economy. And third, rural development will be furthered by a programme to promote and diversify agricultural production and marketing.

6. Environmental sustainability will be enhanced by the successful implementation of two complementary strategies. The hydro-agricultural potential of Mali's two major river systems must be better put to use to relieve the pressure on less fertile soils and hard-to-reach water resources. In order to do this, improved community irrigation systems, including upstream and downstream requirements, will continue to be developed. At the same time, the coordination of environmental activities will continue to be improved and a new programme will work to conserve Mali's biodiversity.

7. Basic health and primary education will be strengthened by several sectoral programmes. Primary health services will be improved by better management of the rural health network and privatized management of community health supplies. The expanded vaccination programme will receive additional support to improve vaccine coverage from 35 to 80 per cent of children by 1996. The programme to combat the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) will also receive support to check further progression of the disease. A drinking water supply network will be provided to the town of Koutiala. In the field of education, a comprehensive programme will be developed and implemented by improving literacy and bridging the gap between formal and informal education systems, in order to achieve retention of basic knowledge, balanced access to primary education among the sexes and improved sensitivity to population issues.

8. Enlightened guidance of the economy will be achieved through the implementation of a programme designed to link long-term national decision-making processes to improved programme implementation capacities. Three converging strategies underpin this programme. First, support will be provided to develop a long-term prospective to monitor macroeconomic developments and to improve policy formulation, implying in particular the improvement of statistical data and regional planning. Second, support to structural modification and its social dimension will consolidate the democratization process, administrative reform and implementation of the national population policy. And finally, support to the programming of public investments and to project coordination will improve the increased relevance of mobilized resources to national development goals.

9. Encouraging growth of the private sector will be sought directly by strengthening technological, management and credit services available to entrepreneurs, and indirectly by improving the quality of the communication and transport services in Mali. Cooperation will be provided to a comprehensive programme designed to create a business incentive environment, to involve banks more fully in promoting the growth of small enterprises and to encourage the emergence of small private technology consulting services. Cooperation will also be provided to mobilize resources required to implement sectoral programmes in the fields of telecommunications, postal services, civil aviation and tourism.

III. MANAGEMENT OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

10. Formulation of the fifth country programme is well-advanced. Thus, UNDP will provide technical cooperation to six intersectoral development programmes (community participation, rural production, women in development, management of the economy, private initiative and management of the environment); to several sectoral development programmes (in the fields of health, education, communications, agro-meteorology, civil aviation and tourism); and to a few traditional projects (in the fields of audio-visual support, horticultural research, irrigation and programme formulation).

11. Implementation of the programme will rely increasingly on national execution through the phased integration of this modality into new activities. National experts will be used in lieu of the traditional expertise. Subcontracting to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local consulting and audit firms will be encouraged whenever possible. Less equipment and more training, nationally and in the context of technical cooperation among developing countries will be provided.

12. Monitoring and evaluation will be carried out at least twice yearly by visits to all distinct programme activities and yearly tripartite reviews for each programme will be done. A yearly review will be undertaken of the country programme as a whole, and a mid-term evaluation and review are scheduled for June 1994.

13. Coordination arrangements relating to the fifth country programme are multifarious. Apart from the in-depth consultations carried out in the process of formulation of the programme and its constituent elements, each of the programmes supported by UNDP comprises a governing body which includes all parties concerned with the programme (government agencies, consular bodies or professional interest groups, donors, NGOs, research institutions, etc.). The UNDP contribution will, inter alia, ensure the continued operation of the governing body, which will be convened regularly. Several other topics are also covered by regular local round-table meetings (employment, water management, refugees, regional integration, etc.). Finally, a global round-table meeting is scheduled for late 1992 or early 1993.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

14. The proposed fifth country programme for Mali is fully consonant with the country's development objectives and strategies. It furthermore confirms and consolidates the orientations put forward to UNDP by the General Assembly and by the Governing Council, while introducing innovative modalities with respect to programme development and coordination. The Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for Mali.